<u>REMARKS</u>

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1 and 4 have been amended. Therefore, after entry of the foregoing claim amendments, claims 1 and 3-4 remain pending and under examination. No new matter is being presented, and approval and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Entry of Claim Amendments

Applicants note that after Final rejection, claim amendments that require only a cursory review by the Examiner (e.g., removing issues for appeal or presenting rejected claims in better form for appeal) may be entered at the non-arbitrary discretion of Examiner with or without a showing of "good and sufficient reasons." Further, claim amendments that "touch on the merits" or otherwise do not require "only a cursory review by the Examiner" (e.g., necessitating further search) may be entered at discretion of Examiner with a showing of "good and sufficient reasons." (See MPEP 714.13 and 37 CFR §1.116).

Previously presented independent claim 1, for example, recites the operation control unit "disables the enabled processing associated with operation of the at least one first operation unit, if the at least one first operation unit is not operated within a predetermined time period" (emphasis added). As proposed herein, Applicants have amended claim 1 from the reverse point of view for further clarification. Thus, amended claim 1 recites, "the temporal cancellation of the locking function will be continued if operation is performed on at least one of the first operation units within a predetermined time period since a previous operation performed on at least one of the first operation units". It is believed that the claim amendments to independent claim 1 will provide further clarification to resolve the Examiner's misinterpretation. Independent claim 4 is amended herein similarly, and it is submitted that substantive features of pending claims 1 and 4 have not been amended.

This Amendment After Final Rejection at least places this application in better form for appeal. Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment should only require a cursory review

because the claim amendments presented herein do not add any new features and/or do not significantly alter the scope of the claims. Consequently, the claim amendments should not require any further search by the Examiner. This Amendment is necessary as it clarifies the issues for consideration by the Board and was not earlier presented because Applicant believed that the prior response(s) placed this application in condition for allowance, for at least the reasons set forth in those response(s). Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment, as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and/or to reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 and 3-4 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Hansen (U.S. Patent No. 6,370,362) in view of A5306ST Instructions Manual (hereinafter "Instruction Manual), and evidenced by Elomaa (U.S. Patent No. 6,892,081). The rejections are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. The following is a comparison between embodiments of the present invention and the cited art.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites while the locking function is being temporarily cancelled, the operation control unit (i) enables the locking function by terminating the temporal cancellation of the locking function, if a predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units or if the case is opened, or (ii) maintains the temporal cancellation of the locking function unless the predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units.

According to certain embodiments of the present invention, while the locking function is being temporarily cancelled, if operation is performed on at least one of the first operation units within a predetermined time period (e.g., three seconds) since a previous operation performed on at least one of the first operation units, then the temporal cancellation of the locking function will be continued without timeout (i.e., a processing associated with the latest operation will be enabled) for yet another predetermined time period starting from commencement of the latest operation. This structure makes it possible to maintain the temporal cancellation of the locking function until the

user completes the necessary input. On the other hand, this structure can terminate the temporal cancellation of the locking function if no operation is performed on at least one of the first operation units within the predetermined time period since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units. This structure can thus achieve the effect of preventing erroneous operations caused as a result of the user forgetting to cancel the locking function, for example.

Regarding the cited references, the Examiner asserts that (i) Hanson discloses disabling certain functions after a predetermined period of time (col. 7 lines 5-12), (ii) Instruction Manual discloses disabling the lock if the cover is opened, and (iii) it is well known in the art that disabling the enabled processing when the operation unit is not operated within a predetermined time period, as evidenced by Elomaa. Based on the above assertions, the Examiner states that the features of pending claim 1, namely "terminating 'the temporal cancellation of the locking function' if the at least one first operation unit is not operated within a predetermined time period (i.e., with the locking function enabled, the processing associated with operation of the at least one first operation unit is disabled)", are disclosed.

Since it appears that the Examiner has misconstrued features recited in independent claim 1, claim 1 is amended herein to clarify that, while the locking function is being temporarily cancelled, if operation is performed on at least one of the first operation units within a predetermined time period (e.g., three seconds) since a previous operation performed on at least one of the first operation units, then the temporal cancellation of the locking function will be continued without timeout (i.e., processing associated with the latest operation will be enabled) for yet another predetermined time period starting from commencement of the latest operation.

In contrast, Hansen discloses that when a controller detects that the slide has been closed, pressing the left soft key 8 will cause the keys to be locked. If the user presses the right soft key 8 or does not do anything for more than three seconds, the keys will be in the unlocked state. Hansen does not teach or suggest that an operation control unit enables the locking function by terminating the temporal cancellation of the locking function, if a predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units or if the case is

opened, or (ii) maintains the temporal cancellation of the locking function unless the predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units, as recited in amended claim 1.

Moreover, Instruction Manual discusses cancelation of a locked state of the keys; however, it does not teach or suggest the aforementioned features on amended claim 1 (and is not cited as doing such). Thus, Instruction Manual fails to cure the deficiencies of Hansen described herein.

None of the cited references, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests this feature of amended claim 1. Independent claim 4 is amended herein to recite features substantially similar to those described above, and therefore the arguments submitted herein are further submitted for independent claim 4. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 4, as well as dependent claim 3, are in immediate condition for allowance.

       In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

       In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 278542007000. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: April 7, 2010   Respectfully submitted,

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